

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Fidel Castro showed himself on television this week to remind the world that he is alive and in power, despite having turned over some titles to his puppet brother. What he does is he throws Cuban patriots in the dungeons; and then when he feels pressure, he releases Cuban patriots, deports them from the country, expels them, gives them the choice, "Do you want to stay in the dungeon or be expelled from your country?" to gain diplomatic and economic oxygen. He wants U.S. sanctions eliminated and he wants the European common position, which ties a close relationship between Cuba and Europe to an improvement in human rights, he wants that common position eliminated.

He comes together with the Spanish Foreign Minister, Mr. Moratinos, and they agree upon a supposed number of political prisoners; under 200, they say there are. The U.S. State Department, in March, makes clear that only those charged under so-called dangerousness—whatever that means—number 5,000 in the Cuban dungeons.

Let's not be fooled. Let's not be fooled. The solution to the Cuban problem is free elections, the release of all political prisoners through free elections in Cuba.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

(Ms. HIRONO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, by continuing to deny the extension of unemployment benefits, Republicans are perpetuating their heartlessness on the backs of the working people of this country. Last week in Hilo, I met a group of contractors who shared with me not only their struggles in today's difficult economy, but that of people they know who have lost their jobs. These hardworking people can't find jobs not for a lack of effort but for a lack of jobs.

Before the July 4 recess, the House passed a bill that would extend unemployment benefits through the end of November. This extension would save 6,000 residents in Hawaii from losing their benefits. Every month that Congress fails to act, another 2,150 people in Hawaii will lose their benefits. These benefits amount to an average of \$415 a week, which helps families buy food and keep a roof over their heads until they can find a job. And for every \$1 they spend, \$1.60 is generated in economic growth for local businesses.

We cannot turn our backs on hardworking people by taking away their unemployment benefits. The time to act is now.

#### TIMMY BERGERON WRITES THE PRESIDENT

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I received a letter from a really mad Cajun named Timmy Bergeron. He is from Houma, Louisiana, and runs an oil-related drilling business.

Timmy's letter is to the President and says, "I am terribly troubled that after striving to find jobs for Americans, you make a hasty decision to stop drilling for 6 months. Did you stop coal mining after all the incidents they have been having? No. Did you stop the airlines after all the crashes and accidents they have been having? No. Now you want to shut down the oil industry for 6 months, which will hurt tens of thousands of workers! I only hope you understand the trickle-down effect this will have on many industries."

Mr. Speaker, the rest of the letter gets a bit more colorful, but Mr. Bergeron wants to know why the President is intentionally putting him out of business. Maybe the President will write him back. Meanwhile, the ill-advised deepwater drilling ban is putting people out of work and is the second disaster in the Gulf of Mexico.

And that's just the way it is.

#### EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR AMERICANS

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, Senate Republicans continue to refuse to allow the extension of unemployment insurance benefits to the American people. Let me tell you what that does in my State.

If we don't extend those benefits within a very short period of time, 125,000 Kentuckians will be without the means to support their families. That means, in addition to human suffering, we're talking about \$125 million a month that will not be spent in the Kentucky economy. Multiply that across the country, and you see the incredible effect that it can have.

I don't think that Republicans really mean it when they say, Well, we're okay with supporting it, but we want to pay for it. They didn't say the same thing when they got into two wars, provided a new entitlement prescription drug benefit, and passed tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans.

You can't build a political philosophy on the pain and suffering of the American people, but that's the only conclusion that I can reach. They figure, create as much pain and damage as you can create, and then the American people will blame the party in power for it. That's a pretty cynical way to approach the lives of the American people and Kentuckians.

#### A TRIBUTE TO THE THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF TEXAS

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the recent accolades of the Third Congressional District of Texas. While I know it's a great place to live, work, and raise a family, clearly, other notable and even national publications have paid attention, too.

For example, D Magazine put the spotlight on the best suburbs for Dallas; and 11 out of all 11 cities in the Third District outside of Dallas ranked among the top: Parker, Murphy, Allen, Sachse, Plano, Frisco, Wylie, McKinney, Rowlett, Richardson, and Garland.

Money Magazine just named McKinney, Texas, as the fifth most desirable place to live in the Nation, while Allen took 16th and Rowlett claimed 24th. In addition, Newsweek featured 10 Third District high schools in June in the America's Best High Schools edition.

My hat goes off to the people who make Texas places so special and the leaders who had the vision and courage to make their dreams for these communities a reality. Congratulations to all. God bless you. I salute you.

#### A TRIBUTE TO TOMMY DURHAM

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Tommy Durham, a gentleman in my community who passed away a few days ago. Tommy was known as the mayor of West Madison Street, where he ran a used appliance business and fixed air conditioners, stoves, heaters. Anything that needed fixing, Tommy could do it.

He was passionately involved in politics and ran for office more than 40 years ago. He did not win the election, but he did win a place in the hearts and minds of the people, and I pay tribute to him and his life today.

□ 1030

#### CUBA'S RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

(Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this week we've seen that the Castro dictatorship has released a handful of political prisoners in an attempt to try to win concessions from the European Union and the United States. It's not the first time they've done that to try to win concessions.

At the same time, the Obama administration recognizes that there are about 5,000 Cubans that are held in the gulags of that nation for the charge of dangerousness. Those are 5,000 additional political prisoners that languish in prison.

We've got to remember who the Castro regime, that terrorist regime, who